United Nations S/2001/196

Security Council

Distr.: General
6 March 2001

Original: English

Letter dated 6 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, of 27 February 2001, regarding the plans of the Abkhaz separatist regime to hold unlawful self-government elections in Abkhazia, Georgia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Peter **Chkheidze**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

01-27524 (E) 060301

Annex to the letter dated 6 March 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia is authorized to state that the decision by the Abkhaz separatist regime to hold self-styled local government elections in Abkhazia, Georgia, on 10 March 2001 is illegal and that the results of these "elections" should be declared void.

In addition to being illegal, these "elections" are illegitimate, since more than half of the native population of the region has been forcibly expelled, the security and safety of the remaining Georgian population is under constant threat, their basic human rights are regularly violated and conditions for the free expression of the will of the people are non-existent.

The self-styled referendum and "presidential elections" held by the Abkhaz separatist regime on 3 October 1999 in Abkhazia, Georgia, was considered unacceptable and illegitimate by the United Nations Security Council (Security Council resolutions 1255 (1999) of 30 July 1999 and 1287 (2000) of 31 January 2000), as well as by the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

It is disconcerting that the decision of the Abkhaz separatists to conduct self-styled local elections come on the eve of the meeting between Georgian and Abkhaz representatives on the confidence-building measures scheduled to take place in Yalta in March 2001.

The Government of Georgia strongly believes that this unlawful action by the Abkhaz side creates additional obstacles to the peace process, counteracts the goodwill of the Government and people of Georgia and undermines the efforts of the international community to find a comprehensive peaceful resolution of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia.

We hope that the Security Council will reiterate its view that the holding of self-styled local elections in Abkhazia, Georgia, is unacceptable.